

## **Ashley's Plants**

Terry Ashley

Ashley's Plants are only available through the Farmer's Market or by appointment at my nursery/residence. Also, I do a limited display at our Hobby Greenhouse Club sales and once a year (first Sat. in April) at Poplar Grove Plantations' Herb and Garden Fair. I started in horticulture 20 years ago in the lawn and garden maintenance facet of the business. With pruners, patience and a library card I learned how to grow the plants I was maintaining. While working as a detail foreman for the largest grounds maintenance company in South Carolina I started my formal education along with the immeasurable experience I gained while maintaining some of the most exclusive gardens in Charleston (including 2 Rainbow Row residences and others regularly featured in Southern Living magazine). While still in school, I decided to start my own landscape/lawn maintenance business which I kept until the year after I moved to Wilmington. Yes, I worked 4-10 hour days here then used the weekend to maintain 8 to 10 lawns in the Charleston area. That lasted 1 season which was long enough to bring all my plants and 3 greenhouses to Wilmington. While growing my own plants, landscaping, etc. I have worked as a grower for the second largest nursery in the U.S. (Baucum's Summerville branch), Tinga Nursery (which helped me acquire my Plant Professional certification), and most recently as an interior plant technician. All of this, along with regular reading of trade magazines, occasional trade shows and visits to some of the local wholesale nurseries have helped me to expand my knowledge of my plants (which I love to share), add to what I have propagated myself and to try to find what is up and coming and new to the market. My plants consist of many varieties of hibiscus propagated by seed and cuttings, many varieties of jade and sedums (both of the crassula family), crape myrtles, hostas, day lilies, hydrangeas, Japanese maples, ferns and many other perennials and tropicals. I also like to dabble in the art of bonsai some. People can come to my nursery by contacting me at 200-5822 and I also will do seminars and talk with garden clubs, etc.

## **Brunswick Beeworks**

Laura Kimball & Jeff Otto

Brunswick Beeworks Inc. sells “all-natural products from the hive,” including raw, local honey and items made from beeswax, including beeswax lip balm, moisturizing hand salve, insect repellent, candles and soaps.

Located in Brunswick County, North Carolina, just over Wilmington’s Cape Fear Memorial Bridge, Brunswick Beeworks currently keeps about 20 hives of bees. While it is a side business of sorts, bees have a way of taking over your life, so Laura and Jeff, the owners-operators, hope to make beekeeping a full-time vocation in the future.

Brunswick Beeworks’ products may be bought only at the Riverfront Farmers Market, held on Saturday mornings in downtown Wilmington, and online at [www.brunswickbeeworks.com](http://www.brunswickbeeworks.com). Visitors to the farmers market are invited to visit our friendly live bees, which are kept behind glass in an observation hive.

## **NATURE'S WAY Farm & Seafood**

Our 3 1/2 acre farmstead is approximately 6 miles north of Hampstead, N.C. and 1 mile east of Hwy. 17, only 3/4 mile from the sound. Just off Sloop Point Rd. When we cleared our land in 1984 an organic garden was the first thing we established. Soon after we built our house we wanted livestock - sheep were selected, followed by American Alpine dairy goats. Didn't take long before Tina through books / trial & error develop award winning goat cheeses taking Best in Show at N.C. Dairy Goat Breeders Association Cheese Competition in Raleigh, N.C. (1993 & 1994) Since then time doesn't allow us to attend any more.

Bill's been a commercial fishermen since 1970 allowing us to have a unique combination of selling fresh local seafood and goat cheeses / goat milk soaps, topped with fresh organic vegetables to the public. All in an atmosphere untenable in any store! We're state certified both in the seafood & cheese operation's and member of Goodness Grows in N.C. also N.C. Agricultural Tourism. Besides selling at our home we're at the Wilmington River Front Farmers Market: Sat. at Water Street downtown & Wed. at Halyburton Park off 17th Street Ext.

Our products include: fresh local seafood - hard & soft goat cheeses - over 20 varieties goat milk soaps - homemade dog treats - local honey - select organic vegetables

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## **Gilbert Farm**

### **Don Gilbert**

Hi. My name is Don Gilbert. I was born in Toledo, Ohio on 9/24/28. After graduating from high school in 1946, I attended Michigan State University in East Lansing majoring in forestry and graduated in June of 1950 with a BS degree in wood technology. It was there that I met my wife Jane and we were married.

I worked in my chosen profession in top management in various wood using industries in the U.S. and Canada until 1984, with two years out with the U.S. Army during the Korean War. In October of 1984 I moved to Wilmington to assist one of my three sons in his business during a bad time when his first wife died in childbirth. Jane and the kids, we have five, joined me in January 1985. We bought a house and four acres in Leland on the Brunswick River and have lived there ever since.

After managing my son's business for three years, I went into financial services and set up my own agency in Leland. I became a real estate broker, securities and principal licensed, and health, life and accident insurance licensed.

I was never a farmer per se, nor did I ever live or work on a farm. I'm what you would call a "gentleman farmer" and had always worked a vegetable garden in my back yard. My first real exposure to selling my own produce was at a Farmer's Market I helped set up in Tempe, Arizona. There I became acquainted with the Horticulturist at Arizona State College, which was an ag-oriented college. He and I established a growers market in Tempe in an old Dodge dealership building. It was a huge success and I was able to sell product from the college experimental fields as well as my own. Seeing as the temperature usually reached 120 degrees by noon, we opened at 6:00AM and closed at 10:00AM. Most of the vendors were sold out by then.

After moving to Leland in 1984 and buying a house with four acres, I was able to start growing again, only this time on a much larger scale than ever before. I soon became acquainted with the old Wilmington City Market manager and signed on for a space. The market was held on Saturday mornings at the parking deck across from the Hilton Hotel. Within a year of joining the market, I was elected president of the market association, a position I held until the market's demise.

When the parking deck market shut down in the early 90's, all the vendors moved into the old Wilmington City Market building which fronts on Front Street and runs all the way through to Water Street. It was a combination arts and crafts and produce growers market. The poor layout of the building and the lack of parking space caused the produce vendors to leave one by one as they couldn't make any money and all the product had to be hand trucked in and out of the building which was a real inconvenience. I left soon after and began selling direct to restaurants. I also participated in the new Whiteville market, which was a good market, but a long distance away. Three vendors including

Meg Shelton and myself set up a mini market in the Café Phoenix parking lot on Saturday mornings at the request of the Café Phoenix. We operated at several different locations around town until the Riverfront Market was formed. This was a joyous time for us old timey vendors who had been operating like gypsies until a new solid home base was formed.

That ends my story except for one major event that took place during the interim period of no formal markets in the area. I became interested in hydroponic greenhouse growing and the former parking deck market manager (who lives in Leland) and I built a 20' by 40' greenhouse on my property. We started growing lettuce on ponds using a self-designed system and were very successful. We added tomatoes, spinach and other items. We sold everything to restaurants.

A couple of years later, David Mizerak, owner of St. Helena Nursery asked me to go to Orlando to a hydroponics conference sponsored by the Cropking greenhouse company in Ohio., We also visited the Ebcot Center and took the behind the scenes tour of the hydroponics operation.. I ended up purchasing four acres of land in Winnabow and my son and I built his house on the property and put up three 22'X 128" gutters connect Cropking greenhouses. The whole operation was computer controlled and we grew mostly tomatoes in a Perlite media. Two years later we added on two more bays to meet our demand and were producing 50,000 pounds of hydroponics tomatoes every nine months. The three months down time was for maintenance and sterilizing the greenhouses in preparation for the new crop, which we grew in house. We sold 32 major supermarkets from North Myrtle Beach to Jacksonville with direct delivery twice a week.

Below market Canadian imports and the major increase in the price of LPG gas forced us to sell out five years later.

## ET TOAD

### Plantings, Pottery & Nature Creations

Elizabeth Todd

It all started in 1990 when I became a Master Gardener under the New Hanover Extension Service and took a refresher course in pottery at the Orange St, studio, awakening my artistic side to create. It was then I realized my main job in life would have to include being a steward of our land. My individual love of nature and working to preserve and promote through natural plantings and ponding drove me, and thus ET TOAD was created.

I grow and sell pond and bog plants, herbs, as well as unusual or interesting specimens like lantana and bougainvillea standards (topiaries). I use no chemicals, pumps or filters in my still water ponds. This encourages dragonfly nymphs to call my yard home. I use this natural approach with all of my plantings. I also sell pottery and high fired stoneware, for indoor or outdoor use: such as toad houses and toad baths, garden markers (herb and pond varieties), and special orders. I also sell a variation of the toad house called an aqua home, with holes for fish to swim through. A nice addition to any aquarium or pond.

I grow and care for all of my plants out of my home. This is also where I do my pottery. When I am not busy with my regular list of garden clients, I occasionally accept people at my home to purchase water plants, lotus plants and other specimens and standards. I presently have a full schedule of garden clients, but I am available for consultations. In the fall or winter I may accept additional clients. Please think of the environment and natural balance of nature whenever you are gardening, such as I have been doing and enjoying for years now.

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